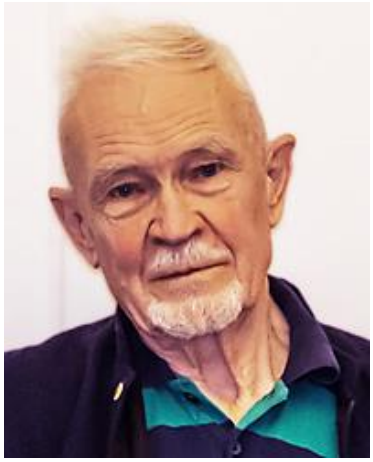
Journal of Environmental Science, Health & Sustainability, 2025, 1(2), 77–78
https://journals.enviromindsolutions.com/jeshs
eISSN: 3067-946X

Dedication

A tribute to Gunnar Jacks (1937–2019): A talented scientist and pioneer in groundwater and geochemistry



This journal issue (vol. 1 & no. 2) is solely dedicated to the pioneering research work, culture, life and legacy of Professor Gunnar Jacks, a distinguished scientist in groundwater, geochemistry, earth sciences and environmental geology. This dedication highlights his groundbreaking academic achievements, perseverance, and humanitarian approach to contributions on global water supply challenges and sustainable development, notably in developing countries. He is a Margdarshak (touch-bearer) for the Global Arsenic Research Community to mitigate the worldwide spread of groundwater arsenic menace. Professor Gunnar Jacks is remembered for his scholarly research contributions, leadership authority in international organizations, and the respect he earned within the groundwater and environmental hydrogeology field.

Professor Gunnar Jacks completed his education with a M.Sc. in mining engineering from KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm in 1963. Soon after, he spent two years in Turkey (1965–1967) to conduct humanitarian work. After that he returned to KTH to pursue his Ph.D., which he completed in 1973. His Ph.D. thesis highlighted the study on the "*chemistry of groundwater in hard rocks*". He also spent 2 years (1976–1978) in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India and worked full-time with the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB). His affiliation with CGWB, India continued until 1984. He went into become an Associate Professor at KTH in 1978 and later became Full Professor of Groundwater Chemistry in 1986. Professor Jacks led the Groundwater Chemistry Division in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering from 1994. Post retirement, he remained engaged as Professor Emeritus at the Department of Sustainable Development, Environmental Science and Engineering, KTH, Sweden.

Professor Jacks was the founding President of the International Society of Groundwater for Sustainable Development (ISGSD) in 2006. The ISGSD is committed to work for minimizing groundwater pollution and to advocate the effective use of groundwater for better health and sustainable livelihood. Prof. Jacks also maintained a strong academic cooperation with Åbo Akademi University, Finland from 1996 and served as Guest Professor at the Institute of Geology and Mineralogy from 2002 to 2006. In 2016, Åbo Akademi University awarded him an honorary doctorate for his exceptional contributions to research and education.

His research extended beyond groundwater chemistry to include environmental issues such as soil and water acidification, mine-waste pollution, geogenic contaminants like fluoride and arsenic, and agricultural challenges such as arsenic in rice and zinc deficiencies in soils and food systems. His research on arsenic in soil, groundwater and food chain led to a strong collaboration with the University of Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal, India. The collaboration led to a discovery and breakthrough research to lay down the scientific understanding of arsenic mobilization in Bengal

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Handling Editor: Dr. Bibhash Nath.

Delta Plain groundwater (resolving historical mystery), that published in 1997, on the mechanisms of "*reductive dissolution of iron oxyhydroxides for arsenic mobilization*" in groundwater in deltaic and similar other geological settings. He was the founding member of the KTH-International Groundwater Arsenic Research Group. Over his illustrious career, he published more than 300 scientific works, including journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters, contributing extensively to environmental science and hydrogeology on a global scale.

He was survived by his wife, Birgitta Jacks (now deceased), a pharmacist and nutritionist, and their two sons, Andreas and Johannes, both medical doctors. Remembered for his humility, dedication, and compassion, Professor Gunnar Jacks leaves behind a lasting legacy in the global hydrogeological community and in efforts to improve water and environmental conditions in developing countries.

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How to cite

Bhattacharya, P., Gustafsson, J.P., Ahmed, K.M.U., Chatterjee, D., 2025. A tribute to Gunnar Jacks (1937–2019): A talented scientist and pioneer in groundwater and geochemistry. Journal of Environmental Science, Health & Sustainability, 1(2), 77–78. https://doi.org/10.63697/jeshs.2025.10032

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